

Remarks:

These remarks are responsive to the Office action dated October 7, 2004. Prior to entry of this amendment, claims 1-27 remained pending in the application. By this amendment, applicant has cancelled claims 25-27 without prejudice.

In the October 7, 2004 Office action, claims 1-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-9, 12-21, and 23-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hattori et al. (US 6,719,415), and claims 1-10 and 12-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hmelar et al. (US 6,183,077). Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hmelar et al.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, and allowance of the pending claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully reviewing the wording of the claims for compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. With respect to claims 1, 16, and 24, the Examiner has suggested that it is unclear what the "complementary key post" and "printing-fluid container bay" are, and where they come from. Applicants first wish to point out that "key post" and "printing-fluid container bay" are not components of the printing-fluid containers claimed in claims 1, 16, and 24, but rather structure that interacts with the claimed printing-fluid containers. Next, applicants respectfully point the Examiner's attention to page 17, lines 22-30 of the application, at which an exemplary key post and ink-container bay are described with reference to Figs. 9-11.

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Figs. 9-11 show a cross-section view of keying pocket 154 receiving a key post 190 as ink container 120 is being seated into ink-container bay 170. Keying pocket 154 and key post 190 are complementarily configured based on a corresponding color of ink. A keying pocket, such as keying pocket 154, can be configured to mate with only key posts corresponding to the correct color of ink. Other ink containers may include similar keying pockets adapted to mate with different key posts associated with different colors of inks. In this manner, each color of ink a printing system is configured to deliver may be associated with a unique combination of a key post and corresponding keying pocket.

As described in the Brief Description of the Drawings, the ink-container bay illustrated in Figs. 9-11 is a type of printing-fluid container bay.

Figs. 9-11 show top cross-section views of a printing-fluid container being seated into a printing-fluid container bay according to an embodiment of the present invention.

The extensive textual description and illustrations provided in the application, of which the above is an example, are believed to render the use of the terms "key post" and "printing-fluid container bay" definite in claims 1, 16, and 24. Accordingly, rejection of claims 1, 16, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 should be withdrawn. Likewise, rejection of all other claims based on the perceived indefiniteness of either "key post" or "printing-fluid container bay" should be withdrawn.

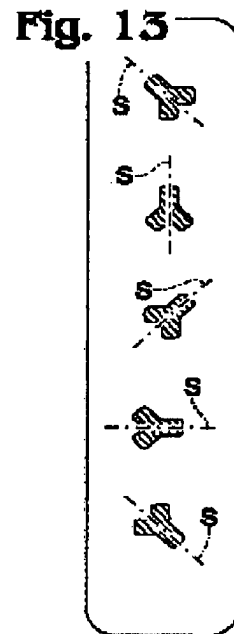
Next, the Examiner suggests that in claims 2 and 17, it is unclear what the "characteristic of the pocket" is. Applicants respectfully point the Examiner's attention to page 16, line 24 to page 17, line 6 of the application, at which exemplary characteristics of a keying pocket are described:

Fig. 5 shows an exemplary keying pocket 154 configured to ensure that an ink container is seated in a proper ink-container bay. Each bay of an ink supply station may be adapted to receive an ink container holding a particular printing fluid (type of ink, color of ink, fixer, preconditioner, etc.). For example, each ink-container bay may include a key post of unique shape and/or orientation corresponding to the

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color of ink that that ink-container bay is adapted to receive. Similarly, an ink container holding that color of ink can include a keying pocket that restrictively mates with a corresponding key post associated with that color. A key post may mate with a keying pocket in a mutually exclusive relationship, meaning that a key post associated with one color of ink would not mate with a keying pocket associated with a different color of ink, or another type of printing fluid. In other words, each color of ink may be keyed by a uniquely configured key post and keying pocket combination. In this manner, a characteristic of the keying pocket of a printing-fluid container may designate the printing fluid held by the container.

The above description provides shape and orientation as nonlimiting examples of characteristics of the keying pocket. Furthermore, dependent claims 3 and 6 recite that the characteristic includes shape and orientation, respectively. Figs. 12 and 13, as well as the textual description relating to Figs. 12 and 13, further make clear what "characteristic of the pocket" means. From the description and illustrations it should be appreciated that any characteristic of the pocket, including, but not limited to, shape and orientation, can be used to designate a particular printing fluid. Therefore, it is believed that use of "characteristic of the pocket" is definite in claims 2 and 17. Accordingly, rejection of claims 2 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 should be withdrawn. Likewise, rejection of all other claims based on the perceived indefiniteness of "characteristic of the pocket" should be withdrawn.



Claim 5 has been amended to recite "a different printing-fluid color" instead of "a different color of printing fluid," which is believed to rectify any indefiniteness

which may exist with respect to claim 5. Accordingly, rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 should be withdrawn. Similar amendments have been made in claims 8, 9, and 18, and rejection of those claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 should also be withdrawn.

The Examiner has indicated that it is unclear from where the "outwardly extending key post" recited in claims 10 and 19 come. Applicants believe this is a typographical error and that the Examiner meant claims 13 and 19, because claim 10 does not recite an outwardly extending key post. With respect to claims 13 and 19, applicants first wish to point out that "key post" is not a component of the printing-fluid containers claimed in claims 13 and 19, but rather structure that interacts with the claimed printing-fluid containers. Furthermore, as described above with reference to claim 1, "key post" is clearly described in the application, and use of such language should not be considered indefinite.

Lastly, the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 of claims 25-27 are rendered moot, because those claims have been cancelled without prejudice.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-9, 12-21, and 23-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hattori et al. (US 6,719,415), and claims 1-10 and 12-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hmelar et al. (US 6,183,077). With respect to Hattori et al., the Examiner has indicated that the feature identified as 252 of Fig. 3 teaches a keying pocket.

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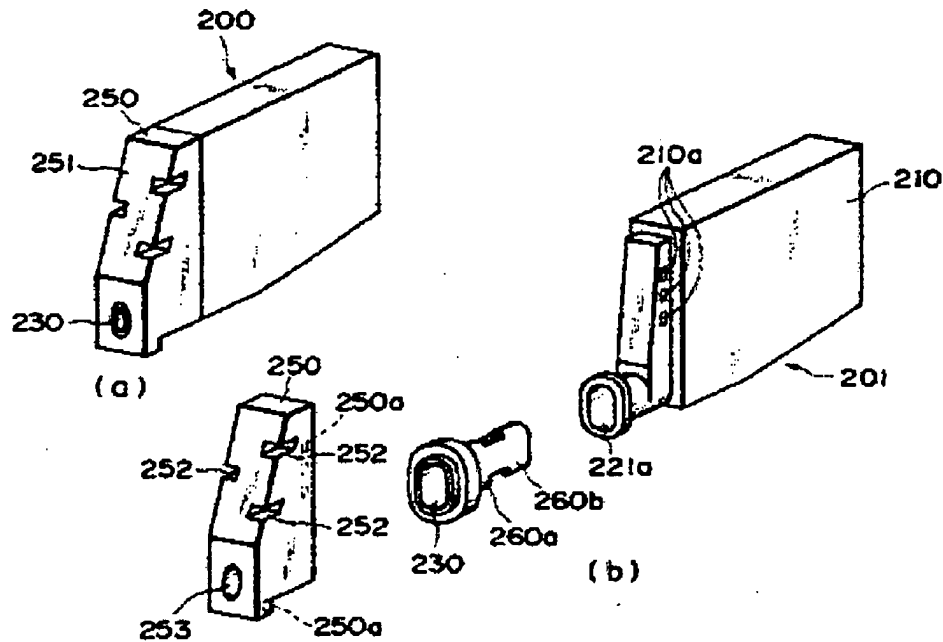
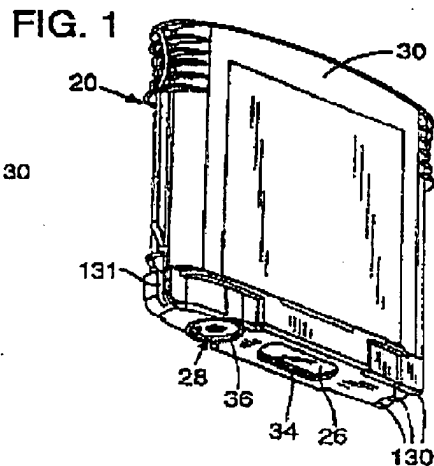


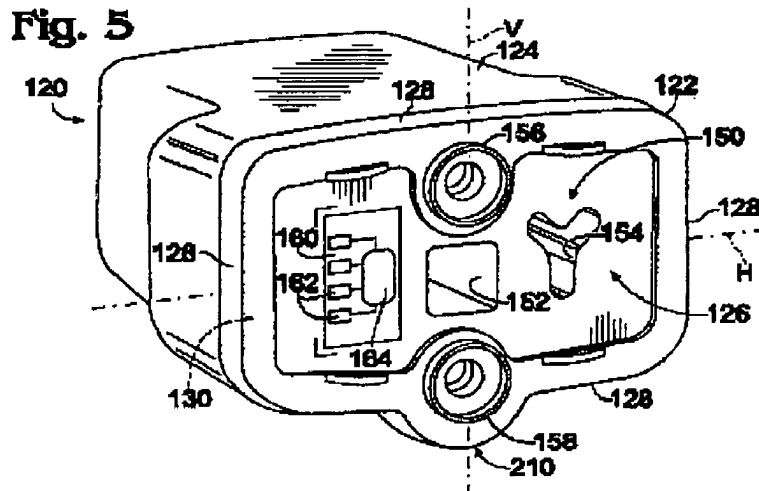
FIG. 3

With respect to Hmelar et al., the Examiner has indicated that the feature identified at 131 of Fig. 1 teaches a keying pocket.



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Applicants respectfully disagree with these characterizations. Nonetheless, in the interest of advancing prosecution of the present application, applicants have amended each of the remaining independent claims to recite a keying pocket recessed from the front face of a reservoir interior an outer perimeter of the front face (or recessed into an interior of a leading surface of the reservoir). This amendment is fully supported by the text of the application and by the drawings, as exemplified by Fig. 5, which shows one possible placement of a keying pocket 154 interior an outer perimeter 128 of the front face.



Neither Hatorri et al. nor Hemlar et al. disclose a keying pocket interior an outer perimeter of a front face of a printing-fluid container. On the contrary, Hatorri et al. and Hemlar et al. each disclose features that are positioned on a perimeter of a front face. Because neither Hatorri et al. nor Hemlar et al. teach, or even suggest, a keying pocket interior an outer perimeter, they can not anticipate amended claims 1-24. Accordingly, rejection of claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 should be withdrawn.

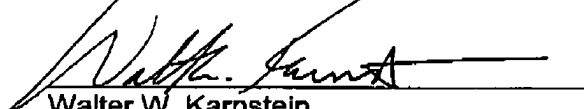
Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 11, which depends from claim 1, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hmelar et al. As described above, amended claim 1 recites a keying pocket recessed from the front face of a reservoir interior an outer perimeter of the front face. Hmelar et al. do not teach or even suggest a keying pocket recessed from the front face of a reservoir interior an outer perimeter of the front face. Accordingly, rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully request that the above amendments to the present application be entered preliminary to its examination. Applicants submit that all claims are in suitable form and content for examination. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner A. Vo, Group Art Unit 2861, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on December 21, 2004.


Christie A. Doolittle

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